

Baritone's performance proves a high note

LAST night's noteworthy evening at the National Concert Hall was a triumph for Barra O Tuama whose current tour presentation brings the magnificent Russian baritone, Dmitri Hvorostovsky — "singer of the world" — to Ireland for the first time.

Launching a series titled "great operatic voices of today" O Tuama introduces the 27-year-old Hvorostovsky to Irish audiences, happier than ever in the knowledge that the singer, although now signed up by leading opera houses across the world, is performing in Ireland first.

On last night's programme of operatic arias Hvorostovsky was joined by the distinguished Welsh tenor Arthur Davies, and by soprano Virginia Kerr.

JOAN TIGHE

Accomplished pianist Ingrid Surgenor made a splendid contribution to the concert.

In his recital Hvorostovsky's passionate musical voice expressed the terrible anguish of MacBeth in Verdi's *Pieta Rispetta Amore* and the tender love song *Oh Maria* from Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa* in contrast and later, the sad love aria from *The Queen of Spades*.

In the powerful duet from Verdi's *Don Carlos*, the Russian baritone and Welsh tenor, swearing eternal friendship in the aria, gave a profound performance.

Hvorostovsky and Vir-

ginia Kerr sang the dramatic and haunting love duet from *La Traviata*, the voices blending beautifully. Arthur Davies' rich clear tenor sang *Donna Non Vidimai* from *Manon Lescaut*. Davies' duet with Virginia Kerr (*Parigi O Cara* from *La Traviata*) showed both artists singing with great feeling and poignancy.

Hvorostovsky's dramatic voice was heard again in *Eri Tu* from Verdi's *Masked Ball* and his splendid singing of *Rodrigos* aria from *Don Carlos* drew applause.

David McInerney was the concert co-ordinator.

A special solo concert by the Russian baritone has been organised for the RDS on tomorrow, Friday evening.